

IMI – Anti-Pollution Law To Limit The VOC Content of 60 Products

In an effort to combat air pollution in Hong Kong, the government will regulate volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from 60 types of products. Legislation will be introduced in 2006 and the first batch of VOC limits will come into on January 1, 2007. The 60 products comprises paints, printing inks, and 6 categories of consumer products (hairsprays, insecticides, insect repellents, air fresheners, floor wax strippers, and multi-purpose lubricants.) It will be illegal to sell these 60 products with VOC content exceeding the proposed limits.

The limits, will be introduced in phases, starting with hairsprays, lithographic ink, letterpress ink, flexographic ink, and flexographic fluorescent ink. The majority of the VOC limits will come into force by January 1st, 2009. The initial limit for hairsprays will be 80% of the products' volume and will be reduced to 55% by 2009. The VOC limit for inks will be 300 grams per litre while paints will range from 730 to 50 grams per litre. Suppliers of paint will be allowed to gradually meet the standards between 2008 and 2010. Details of the VOC limits of the 60 products is available at <http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/ea/papers/ea1128cb1-348-4-e.pdf>

U.S. suppliers may need to reformulate their products to meet the requirements if they are exporting these products to Hong Kong. Opportunities may also exist for U.S. manufacturers of environmentally-friendly products as suppliers of the 60 types of products sought alternatives sources of supply to comply with the new VOC limit regulations. For example, suppliers of high-VOC solvent-based paints may need to source water-based alternatives and printers would need to install effective emission control devices to their printing machines to reduce the VOC emissions during the printing process.

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